

ACTION SCT-00

INFO LOG-00 EEB-00 AF-00 AID-00 A-00 ACQ-00 CA-00
CCO-00 CG-00 COME-00 CTME-00 INL-00 DEAE-00 DOEE-00
DOTE-00 PERC-00 DS-00 DHSE-00 EUR-00 OIGO-00 FAAE-00
FBIE-00 VCI-00 FO-00 H-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 INSE-00
IO-00 LAB-01 L-00 CAC-00 MOFM-00 MOF-00 M-00
VCIE-00 NEA-00 DCP-00 NRC-00 NSAE-00 ISN-00 NSCE-00
OCS-00 OMB-00 NIMA-00 CAEX-00 PA-00 PM-00 PRS-00
P-00 ISNE-00 DOHS-00 FMPC-00 IRM-00 SSO-00 SS-00
USSS-00 NCTC-00 CBP-00 SCRS-00 PMB-00 DSCC-00 PRM-00
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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
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INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY
USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY
SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER GILANI OUTLINES GOP PLANS ON THE
FUTURE FIGHT AGAINST EXTREMISM, IDPS, CHANGES TO THE
ANTI-TERRORISM LAWS AND BILATERAL RELATIONS

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: In an hour-long meeting September 18, Prime Minister Gilani said the Malakand campaign against extremist groups is 70 percent completed. He emphasized the need to undertake reconstruction and rehabilitation in the region, not only to help the population there but also to convince the population in other conflict-affected areas that the government will take care of their needs once the extremist threat is removed. He noted that the government is currently holding some 2,500 detainees and anticipated the number would grow to over 5,000. He emphasized that the government is committed to ensuring that the detainees would not suffer from inhumane treatment. Changes to the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) will resolve issues related to Extra-Judicial Killings, he maintained. In response to a request from the government, the Ambassador advised Gilani that we are ready to assist the government address the detainee issue and have a prison expert due to visit Pakistan after the Eid. Gilani welcomed U.S. support, but cautioned that we should not have a high profile on these programs for fear of triggering more public controversy.

¶2. (C) On other issues, the Ambassador briefed Gilani on the Embassy's plan to acquire additional land for the planned construction project. The proposal is currently in the Prime Minister's office for approval. He undertook to discuss the issue with the Foreign Minister and give the request full consideration. The Ambassador also highlighted the importance of the government's implementation of its commitments to the International Monetary Fund on the electricity tariff. She previewed the upcoming Friends of Democratic Pakistan summit in New York and noted that the World Bank will roll-out the much anticipated Border Trust Fund at the meeting. End Summary

Winning the Fight Against Extremism

13. (C) Welcoming the Ambassador and the DCM on September 18, an obviously well-prepared Prime Minister Gilani launched quickly into an extended monologue on the government,s handling of the challenge in Malakand and the way forward. He stressed that the battle for hearts and minds remains key to securing the government,s victory over extremism, observing that the government will not win the trust of the populations in other conflict-affected areas if it does not satisfy the needs of the people of Malakand. For now, Gilani assessed that the government had achieved seventy percent of its objectives in Malakand and is pressing forward on the remaining thirty percent. He noted his efforts to maintain political solidarity in the fight against extremism there, including bringing Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif (PML-N) on his first visit to Mingora. The success of the effort was reflected in the huge and emotional outpouring by the people of the area on Pakistan,s Independence Day, August 14.

14. (C) Gilani also reviewed his government,s efforts to ensure that civilians, military, and law enforcement personnel were compensated fairly and equitably for their losses. The government has committed Rs. 24 billion (USD 300 million) for reconstruction and rehabilitation in the region. They have provided Rs. 25,000 (USD 312) cash payments to nearly 270,000 families. The government has also raised salaries for police, Frontier Corps, and Frontier Constabulary, Gilani maintained, while instituting risk allowances (i.e., combat pay) for military personnel and Rangers. The government has placed Rs. 500 million (USD 6.25 million) in a special fund to compensate military personnel killed or wounded in action or their families.

15. (C) While Malakand rehabilitation is the priority, Gilani is looking forward to next steps. The army is building a cantonment in Malakand and will remain there. The Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is in disarray after the death of Baitullah Mehsud and the government has the opportunity to press them harder. Gilani is looking for the start of military operations in the FATA, but acknowledged that this will bring a new wave of IDPs. He also noted that the military has exhausted seventy percent of its materiel and is desperate for re-supply. The Ambassador urged that the government work with UN agencies and others urgently to ensure that supplies for IDP relief are available in DI Khan, where the outflow of displaced families from Waziristan is expected to hit most heavily. She also noted that we are ordering some USD 385 million in equipment for the army with funds from the FY09 supplemental. Gilani suggested that he, the Ambassador and Chief of Army Staff meet after the Eid to discuss the army's requirements.

Detainees

16. (C) Some 2,500 militants have surrendered or been captured and are currently in detention, Gilani noted. He anticipated that the number would soon rise above 5,000, as extremist groups are broken up, their leadership is captured or eliminated, and the changing seasons leaves the militants with nowhere to go and nothing to sustain themselves through the harsh mountain winter. The challenge now is to find someplace to accommodate the prisoners. The government is anxious to avoid charges that the prisoners are being treated inhumanely, but they cannot be released if it would mean they would return to the fight. The government needs to build a maximum security prison to house the prisoners. The Ambassador advised Gilani that we are prepared to assist the government with the detainee issue and, in fact, we have an expert on prisons traveling to Pakistan to discuss these issues after the Eid. We had already received requests for assistance from others in the government. Gilani welcomed U.S. support, but advised that the United States not play a high-profile role in the detention issue as this may trigger a new round of public controversy concerning U.S. activities in Pakistan. The Ambassador suggested that we might be able to work through the UN Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC),

which has also expressed a readiness to be helpful on the issue.

¶7. (C) Gilani raised the government's plan to revise the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), noting that they had been in discussion with the judiciary to consider how to ensure that the detained militants would not be able to turn to the courts for relief. The press has reported the possibility of extra-judicial killings, the Ambassador pointed out, and we are also hearing reports about mass graves, retribution, and score settling. Gilani did not challenge the Ambassador's comments. He expressed his belief that the proposed reforms to the ATA will eliminate the problem of extra-judicial killings. The Ambassador suggested that it would be a positive development to get a respected outside interlocutor, like Asma Jehangir of the Human Rights Committee of Pakistan (HRCF), to be a part of the process to ensure that the concerns about detainee treatment are appropriately handled.

Embassy Expansion

¶8. (SBU) Turning to bilateral issues, the Ambassador briefed the Prime Minister on the Embassy's request to lease some eighteen acres of land adjacent to the existing Embassy property. She described the basic site plan and noted that the nearly USD 1 billion project would pump large amounts of money into the local economy and create many new jobs for Pakistanis. The Prime Minister commented that the media and opposition political groups have been playing to the gallery over the project. Ambassador believed we had a deal with the landlord, the Capital Development Authority. DCM added that we expected treatment identical to any other embassy, of which there were many, acquiring additional land on the enclave. Gilani undertook to review the request when it reaches his desk and to discuss it with the Foreign Minister. (N.B.: Foreign Minister Qureshi advised the Ambassador a week earlier that the file was with the Prime Minister and that we should raise it with him directly. This should also be raised with President Zardari during his visit to the U.S.)

Economic Issues

¶9. (SBU) In response to the Ambassador's comment regarding the need to address the electricity tariff issue per the IMF Stand-by Arrangement, Gilani appealed for U.S. support to the energy sector. He reaffirmed that the GOP will implement its agreement with the IMF and outlined a three-step process to address energy shortfalls: short-term) rental power plants; medium-term) enhancing existing capacity; long-term) develop new hydel capacity. The people are impatient, however, and have rioted over power supplies. It is critical, Gilani concluded, that the energy problems be resolved and Pakistan's industrial and agricultural sectors be protected.

¶10. (SBU) Finally, the Ambassador advised the Prime Minister that the World Bank will announce the start-up of the Border Trust Fund as part of the FODP Summit, Sept. 24. This will provide a good foundation, especially for smaller donors to support development in the FATA, NWFP, and Baluchistan. Gilani welcomed the news and said that he has been working with the coalition partners, MQM and ANP, to address structural issues in Baluchistan. He has also touched on the subject with the opposition PML-N.

PATTERSON